

**Statement of  
Ford Motor Company**

**Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection  
Hearing on  
“Self-Driving Cars: Road to Deployment”**

**February 14, 2017**

Ford Motor Company believes autonomous vehicles have significant potential to improve mobility and safety, as well as reduce traffic congestion. Our CEO, Mark Fields, announced last year that Ford intends to deploy an SAE Level Four vehicle to move goods and people, such as ride sharing, ride hailing, or package delivery fleets in geo-fenced areas in 2021. That vehicle, which will be built at our Flat Rock Assembly Plant in Michigan, will not have a steering wheel or accelerator and brake pedals. We are working hard toward that goal, and – as with everything Ford does – safety is top of mind.

Ford has over a century of experience designing, manufacturing, and selling safe cars and trucks. We are applying that expertise to our autonomous vehicle program. We currently have 30 autonomous vehicles in our development fleet. The vehicles are used on closed test tracks, where we create and control specific traffic situations, as well as on public roads in Arizona, California, and Michigan, using a trained safety driver and engineer to serve as spotter in each vehicle. Ford is working collaboratively with major research institutions, like the University of Michigan, Stanford, and MIT, as well federal and state regulatory bodies, to contribute to and benefit from a community of shared learning.

Having the right policies in place should be a common goal. We commend the National Highway Traffic Administration (NHTSA) for the great step forward it took in the Federal Automated Vehicles Policy (FAVP) last year. Nevertheless, it does not solve statutory or regulatory impediments to autonomous vehicle testing and deployment. Moreover, many states are considering policy changes that go beyond traditional state roles with respect to driver licensing and vehicle registration, traffic laws and regulations, safety inspections, and regulating vehicle insurance and liability. The most concerning of these are disparate vehicle testing and performance standards, which could ultimately hinder innovation.

With this in mind, two federal policy actions would be beneficial. First, NHTSA should commence a rulemaking to amend existing Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) that currently mandate human operator controls to allow automated driving systems, as well as update prohibitive FMVSS test procedures. Second, Ford suggests Congress could consider increasing the statutory Safety Act exemption cap to permit autonomous vehicle deployment while this rulemaking is underway.

Ford wants to continue working collaboratively with policymakers to ensure the proper groundwork is laid today for the future deployment of safe autonomous vehicles. We stand ready to assist you and appreciate your interest in these issues, which are vital to the future of our company.